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make sacrifices for God. But it is harder proverbially to please many masters, than it is to please one; and so it will often happen that this bringing together of many individuals from different grades and occupations will interfere with anything like unity of idea, and will greatly embarrass an architect. And often even the presence of one inharmonious individual, combined with these various checks and business methods that I have referred to, (which nevertheless have all their value,) will render it very difficult even for those who are most anxious to act simply for God's glory, to keep the fact sufficiently before their eyes that they are building for God and for posterity,—should I not rather say for eternity?—and not simply for the accommodation and convenience of themselves and their neighbours.

Now whatever difficulties our ancestors experienced—and I suppose they had their share in drunken workmen, cheating tradesmen, low-minded clergy—they certainly were not trammelled precisely in the way that our modern church builders are. In the first place, they were in no danger of falling into the hands of ignorant or unsympathizing architects. The desire to build a church would be at once communicated to the bishop, who, if not himself competent to supply the design and superintend its

execution, (as was often the case,) would entrust it at once to some cleric with whom it was alike a vocation and a labour of love, to embody the devotion of the faithful in those marvellous creations of enduring stone which we may safely affirm that nothing but a holy life and habitual meditation on the mystery and significance of spiritual things could have excogitated and brought into existence.

Secondly, they had no peculiar views or theories to serve, and, what is more, they *were not afraid of being charged with having them*. It was understood then that the one only conceivable object in building a church was to promote the glory of God, and in such a work cavilling was at once excluded. At the present day, it is really not too much to say that the first object in an individual (of course with a few notable exceptions), be he founder or architect, is to please men, whether it be some individual ratepayer, or the somewhat impalpable public; and, above all, not to be attacked in some scurrilous party-newspaper.

I am not saying again, observe, that the absence of all checks upon individuals is by any means to be desired; but it is a fact not admitting of question, that the circumstances under which we build churches now are calculated materially to obscure from our eyes the object for which they are designed. You

can scarcely go into a church without seeing evident tokens of this fact; you cannot converse with an architect without either, on the one hand, hearing him apologise for the absence of some good feature or the presence of some bad one, of which the blame is to be laid on local or individual prejudice; or, on the other, finding that he will protrude upon you certain doctrinal jealousies—which are almost certain to arise from defects in knowledge or shallowness of ideas.

These, I repeat, are facts within the experience of every one, and it is impossible but that they must shut out from people's eyes, in the work in which they are engaged, that which I maintain is unmistakeably written on every erection of the great ages of church building—that they are designing for God in the first instance, and not for man. And I conceive that, if we would in any degree emulate their works, we must one and all try to rid ourselves of these petty, paltry feelings, and strive to realize the fact that our buildings are destined to stand long after the recollection of local, or national, or even the wide-world controversies of the day shall have perished. Faith should be the very foundation on which we build. Had our ancestors looked only to themselves, we should certainly not now be in possession of the magnificent structures to which it

has been our good fortune to succeed ; and what but contempt can we expect from our posterity, if it be found that all our works have been marred by a descent into the arena of the miserable politics and selfish squabbles of the day, instead of keeping our thoughts fixed on the Invisible, and believing that just as surely as the sun, when he appears in his strength, will dry up all the vapours that hang about our valleys and hill-sides, so certainly will the returning spirit of faith and love—so soon as God shall be pleased to grant it to our prayers—quench all those suspicious and malevolent feelings which now too often hang over our dwellings and darken our horizon. And surely one good work which our architectural societies are competent to perform, is that of shaming persons out of their pettinesses and individualities, and boldly proclaiming the doctrine that no architectural design can stand the test of time which is not built on faith, and does not look forward deeply into futurity.

So much, then, for the spirit of church' building, which may be said to be embodied in the exterior fabric, the long-drawn nave, the darkened chancel, the solid, massive tower, or heaven-pointing spire.

And now let us approach the interior of the building.

And here what strikes us again in any ancient

building is its unity of conception. By this I do not mean, of course, that all its windows are of the same date or style, or that the same amount of ornament is lavished on every part alike,—quite the contrary; for I need scarcely say that it is a very rare thing indeed to find a church all of one style, either as regards the fabric or the ornamentation. Rather what makes the fact specially striking is this—that not only was unity impressed upon the conceptions of the first architect, but that also every subsequent change appears to be in harmony. And yet in many churches the changes were by no means few, the First Pointed architect undoing the work of his Norman predecessor, and then leaving his own work to be superseded by the designs of one in the Middle Pointed period, and the last named also being lucky if he had not to give way in his turn to the less refined ideas of a Perpendicular builder; but still, throughout, every addition or alteration will be found subordinated to the original conception of the building. How differently conceived have been the additions made to our churches during the last two hundred years! First of all, when space was wanted, (and no additions, I need scarcely say, were made save on this utilitarian principle,) the portion allotted to the clergy was reduced to the smallest possible dimensions—the smallest, that is,

that were thought consistent with comfort,—in a reading-desk duly guarded against draughts and curious eyes; then, secondly, came the age of contriving galleries by village carpenters, in every possible and impossible position; and lastly, when the population would go on increasing, and they were not yet driven by the damp and dirt of the church to the warmer atmosphere (I mean here warm according to outward sensation,) of the meeting-house, then came the necessity of a new aisle, and such an aisle, with its brick walls, flat ceiling, sashed windows, and super-added skylight, and damp wooden floor, with a batch of all manner of shaped pews, each striving to be higher than its neighbour towards the east or best end, and some rows of narrow, crowded, dark benches towards the west, yclept “free seats,” and all crowned by an ill-spelt inscription very pompously announcing that Thomas Smith and William Higgins were churchwardens when the abomination was erected, and that the Church Building Society contributed £100 towards the expenses.

This, we should all understand, is not unity at all. But what was it that constituted unity with those old builders? That is not at first sight, perhaps, so very apparent. It was not that unity which consists in simplicity or poverty, but in reducing many con-

stituent parts into due subordinate relation to one leading object. And it is this, I conceive, which we miss in many recent restorations, and in most modern churches. In churches built fifty years ago, even, this was not the case. They did possess a most marked and prominent unity. The centre, then, to which all pointed and converged, was the pulpit, towering generally, in large churches, over a priest's desk and a clerk's desk, and masking very effectually a small square deal table, at which it was believed by the majority of the unlearned that on certain great days, like Christmas-day, Easter-day, and Whit-Sunday, some mysterious rite was practised by a few old people, who were not uncommonly thought to be paid for the share they took in it.

Now, happily, this monstrous evil is being slowly removed. The pulpit is being somewhat reduced in size and prominence, and the seats are not commonly made to converge towards it. But then we not unfrequently are left in this forlorn condition—that, having lost our late head (certainly a most inexcusable usurper,) we have not put any one into the vacant place. This is the condition of the great majority of new and restored churches: they have no central object of unity—nothing which bespeaks the nature of the building, and the purpose for which it was (mainly) intended. What that purpose is, I need scarcely say.

Churches are not consecrated (consecration makes a church) for the purpose of forming preaching-houses, or even oratories, but for the purpose of celebrating Sacraments and sacramental acts. And of all such acts, it is superfluous to say that the Holy Eucharist is the highest and most perfect. Of that the altar is the seat and symbol. Therefore, by consequence, the altar in every church should be made to arrest and fix the eye of the beholder ; and to this everything should point.

This is plainly the theory of our Prayer Book : Matins and Evensong for every day in the week ; the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on every LORD'S Day, or other festival, at least. Now this truth should be proclaimed by the material fabric and arrangement of our temples.

I will point this out in several particulars ; for this—though I have been slow in announcing it—is the design of this paper. And first of all, then, it involves and implies that it should have a separate and distinct building for its reception, more ornate and more elevated than the rest of the church. This is the theory and intent of *the chancel*, viz., to exhibit to the best advantage and to do honour to those ministrations and functions which are peculiar to God's House. These functions are so exhibited by having the whole chancel (and especially the sacarium and

easternmost part) raised considerably (by three steps, if possible) above the level of the nave, by keeping the seats low and longitudinal in it, and by excluding from it all who are not required to take part in celebrating them; they have honour done to them by making the chancel constructionally a distinct building, with its separate walls and proportions, its own distinct entrance and special ornaments; and still more by separating it inwardly, as it is separated outwardly, by the cancelli, or screen; not, of course, a screen that is impervious to the eye—for that would be to defeat the very object proposed—but one which, setting aside for the present its symbolical meaning, will help to teach this most important practical truth—that the great characteristic services of God's House are the highest work in which the creature can engage, or rather that the Lord Himself is the real agent in them, and that He has been pleased to tie His agency to the intervention of certain whom He has commissioned to be His representatives on earth, and that the scene where this high act is performed needs to be marked and distinguished in the most honourable manner that we can devise.

I believe this truth to be of the highest religious and moral importance,—that we have failed hitherto utterly to impress it upon our people, and that we shall still fail to do so, unless, concurrently with

sound doctrinal instruction, we make our churches teachers with us of what it is so needful for all to understand.

It is the capital fault of modern church-building (still, of course, acknowledging many honourable exceptions,) that proper attention has not been paid to the chancel, and what belongs to it. It has been treated simply as a part of the Church : if the nave is beset with pews, so is the chancel ; if that has open seats, so they will be found in the chancel, with the single difference, perhaps necessitated by its greater narrowness, that the seats run east and west, instead of north and south. But, I repeat, if the chancel be only a portion of the Church, why retain the costly mockery and unreality of building or continuing a division at all ? Chancels would certainly never have been built, unless there had been a proper use for them ; neither ought they now to be retained and perpetuated, unless that use continues. If the problem be simply to stow the altar where it will take least room—and the law requires it to be a permanent portion of the building (though I have seen a large Church in the diocese of Winchester without either font or altar)—then the best thing would be to build a little pent-house, or lean-to, at the east end, which should contain it : but if we decide on retaining our chancels, then, in the name of consistency and com-

mon sense, let us not continue to sanction the monstrous sham of not using them as chancels; if they serve no actual object in our ordinary worship, they are an inconvenience and a nuisance. So strong, indeed, has the feeling on this subject become in me by the experience of not a few years devoted to an observance of things among us, that I do not hesitate to say that a restoration is, in my judgment, *for the highest purposes* altogether valueless, which does not secure a well-elevated altar with a suitable dossal, and the exclusive appropriation of the chancel to the choir. And of new Churches I must also say, that they will certainly fail (unless these conditions are complied with) in enabling our people to apprehend the true object of Church worship, which in its highest parts is nothing less than this—the joining with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, in adoration of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, (Who should be as really present to the faith of the spiritual worshipper as He was in vision of old to S. John,) and in renewing to ourselves the benefits of that Passion.

I am quite aware that, in making these remarks, I am seeming to cast a censure on many recent well-meant efforts of clergy and laity. In this very town where much has been so recently and so zealously done, these strictures will more or less be felt to apply.

I feel sure, however, that our excellent host will not grudge me the privilege of recording my opinion on a matter of such general (and, in my judgment, vital,) concern. The fact is, (and this is the great misfortune of the age in which we live,) that, owing to the defectiveness of our education (both clergy and laity) we only by slow degrees, and after many blunders, at length stumble forwards into something like correct notions on ecclesiastical matters, whether of doctrine, or discipline, or ritual; oftentimes in later years having to try to undo, or at least very painfully to regret, the errors of our previous life. All that one pretends, then, is to be *a little* in advance of one's neighbours; and if there are any who cannot go along with all the remarks that I have made, I would beg them at least to believe that they are not made in any trifling or captious spirit, but in the firm belief that they are of the very essence of our art, and that whatever difficulties, real or imaginary, may in this or that instance obstruct their realization, they will in a few years become recognized canons and maxims with every one who is worthy to bear the name of a Churchman.

I would desire, therefore, that this paper, so far as it may reach, should take the form of an appeal in behalf of the right use of our chancels. This, I am persuaded, must be the fountain-head of the revival of religion among us.

Let us see what important matters are connected with this seemingly external arrangement. First of all, then, it proclaims, more forcibly than words can do, this great cardinal truth—that the celebration of the Holy Eucharist is the central act of Christian worship, from which is chiefly derived the virtue and efficacy of our daily office, the use of the collect for the Sunday throughout the week connecting the two intimately together; and this, which is more than anything else what our people have to learn, I am persuaded cannot be taught by the most effective preaching, so long as the altar is hidden or depressed, and devoid of any distinguishing ornaments.

Our congregations, I need scarcely remark, are sadly deficient in reverence; but how can they possibly learn reverence, if the clergy by *every means* in their power do not mark their sense of the great dignity of the holy altar, and of what is done there? I say by *every means* in their power, not imagining that it is solely an architectural question, but believing that the Church-builder or restorer has in his hands an engine very powerful for influencing the minds of men; and that it ever has been the will of God to use external things for this purpose, just as we learn from the Apocalypse of S. John that they will all be employed hereafter;—beauty of colour and

form to ravish the eye, harmonious sounds appealing to and stimulating the ear.

And here, perhaps, a few practical hints may not be out of place. The altar should never be less than six feet long, and raised on a separate platform or footpace, and three feet six high. Its vestments, too, should be as rich as we can any way provide, and at the time of celebration the white linen cloth should only be laid on the top of the slab, and not allowed to hang down at most more than two inches in front.

But the whole space of the chancel is not required for the Eucharistic celebration. For this, from ten to twenty feet will suffice, according to the depth of the chancel, and will terminate with a step. After that, there should be again a vacant space of some few feet; and then should come the stalls on either side, (or benches as substitutes for them, if they cannot be afforded,) with book-desks in front, and subsellæ below for choir-boys. This is what is properly called the *Chorus Cantorum*—a name which sufficiently indicates it to be the proper place for all who assist the priest in offering the sacrifice of praise and prayer. And I am sure every one who has had experience in these matters will agree with me in testifying to the very great benefits arising from the adoption of this arrangement to all parties concerned. The Prayer Book, it is evident, contemplates this arrangement in

ordering that chancels should continue "as in times past," and expressly speaks of the clergy being assisted by certain "clerks," i.e., observe, not an individual functionary of that name, who has long since ceased to consider himself in any sense ἐν κλήρῳ, and who but rarely answers to the secondary sense of the word by being a learned person; but a body of persons who are competent to aid in the proper rendering of the plain song of the Church, and which, because it is to be sung or said, (which is practically the same thing,) is called, when said in the evening, *Evensong*. And this being so, it follows of necessity that they must be placed as near as possible to the clergy, in order that they may aid them in the most effective manner. The service, therefore, I maintain, in the first place, cannot be performed to the best advantage, unless this arrangement be adopted.

Neither, secondly, can those who take part in it in any other way be made so forcibly to feel their responsibility as office-bearers in the Church, as by being brought in this manner into close relations with the clergy. For the same reason, I may also add, that very beneficial results are usually found to follow from putting the choir in the Church's special vestment, the surplice.

But, thirdly, a very large share of the benefit of this (which is also the only proper arrangement) will

accrue to the *congregation*; for so only can they practically understand that their devotions are being led; and a lead, of course, implies some to follow. The whole service is a tribute of homage to Almighty God, offered day by day in the name of the whole parish; and for this purpose every Christian is constituted a priest, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, through JESUS CHRIST." But the body, we know, is made of different members, who are differently qualified and gifted, and though all have a place, all have not the *same* place, in this work. The male sex, on the one hand, are specially entrusted by the Apostles with this privilege: in S. Paul's Epistle to S. Timothy there is a very remarkable passage affirming this view, the meaning of which is unhappily quite lost in our version, but which ought to be translated thus: "I will that those who are men in every place pray, lifting up holy hands;" but of these again, of course, some must be selected who are better able to discharge this duty of leading; and with these it has ever been the custom of the Catholic Church—grounded, apparently, on our LORD's special acceptance of the infant Hosannahs that were offered to Him in the days of His earthly pilgrimage—to associate boys.¹

¹ A practical difficulty is sometimes experienced in finding boys: in such cases, I see no insuperable objection to admitting girls, but they had better, for their own sakes, if possible, be put rather out of sight.

How much we have lost in surrendering this most beautiful and elevating idea of worship need not be said. But I am bold to affirm that there is no other way in which we are likely to recover it—and would not the recovery of it be like the re-animation of our congregations?—save by reverting to this legitimate use of our chancels.

It is unnecessary to tell me that there are difficulties in the way. What good work ever was unobstructed by difficulties? But the difficulties are really all in our own power; they arise chiefly from these causes: first of all, the clergy as a body, it must be confessed, have no sufficient faith in the Church-system, for practically, very often the chancel, as every one knows, is in the entire power of the clergyman; secondly, with but very few exceptions, (I myself only know of two,) our architects are either deficient in acquaintance with these points, or else they have not the proper moral courage which should induce them absolutely to refuse to take part in building or restoring a Church which it is not intended to arrange on the true Church-model; and thirdly, our people are ill, very ill, instructed. But the remedy of all this is also in the hands of the clergy; and there does seem a special call upon us, the clergy, and specially on those of us who are professedly studying these subjects, to make an effort to remedy it. There is no greater

mistake, in my judgment, than to identify ecclesiastical architecture with archæology. Ecclesiastical architecture must of all sciences be the most *living*; because, seeing that its province is to raise material structures for the Church, it must partake of the promises of perpetuity and renewal which have been assured to the Church herself; and to build an edifice with the division of nave and chancel externally, and afterwards to put both on the same level within, and to make the existence of the latter only a method of gratifying secular pride, by placing there the families of the Rector or the Squire, and leaving the altar almost undistinguishable,—is not only a blunder in art, but a direct and positive injury to religion.

My advice, then, to every Church-builder or restorer is this—Make sure of this point at least, for if you do not secure this, you secure nothing worth having.

There are indeed, two cases of real difficulty to which I will refer: 1, is when the law, in its great jealousy for the rights of property, has taught certain impropiators to consider the chancel (most erroneously, of course,) as their property, and they will not surrender it to its proper use; or, 2, when, from the immense size of the chancel, it cannot conveniently be used for the purposes of worship. In the latter case, the altar must be brought forward, having a screen behind it. In the former there must be an

artificial chancel constructed in the nave. These, I conceive, are allowable expedients in case of necessity, and they secure the practical object required.

The proper performance of divine service is a question which especially concerns the devout layman. If the clergyman is boxed up at one end of the nave, with the clerk in a box contiguous, and a band of conceited instrumentalists in a box at the other end, or else a herd of roaring children—the congregation, and specially the male adult congregation, are effectually shut out from their proper share in all and every part of the service : it will be as impossible to go along with a vulgar, drawling clerk in the responses, as it will be with the high pitch of the children in the hymns, or the vagaries of the bassoon, and clarionet, and fiddle in the anthem.

But if all the force of officials is combined—combined, too, in the place most suitable for sound, and when they are visibly the leaders of the congregation; if the music be kept in the position of simply aiding¹ and guiding the congregation, and if there be a due admixture of the human voice, (“ the best member that we have,”) as found most perfect after cultivation in the adult male, and the instrumental accom-

¹ For this reason the organ which accompanies the choir should have a place assigned to it in the chancel, eastward of the *Chorus Cantorum*, so that it may not intercept and drown the voices.

AN APPEAL FOR THE CHANCEL.

niment be properly subordinated—then we have a church-service, I do not hesitate to say, an offering present to the Most High, uniting, as the Apostle teaches, the exercise of the spirit and the understanding, such as no other Church on earth has enabled her people to offer; and it will indeed be our condemnation and our shame, if, in these days when we are looking narrowly into the uses of things, and professing to lay aside prejudice, and to follow the dictates of reason and common sense, we cannot vindicate for our Church the liberty to do right, and to fulfil her appointed function of setting forth the glory of God in the most appropriate and edifying manner.